

OUR NEW NORTHWEST.

WHEN, only a few years ago, the cry was 54° 40' for our northern boundary or fight, and, in spite of the cry, the Government yielded and fixed the northern boundary of the United States on the Pacific side at 49°, certainly it was not expected that so soon we should acquire by purchase a vast territory whose southern boundary should be 54° 40', and whose northern extremity should reach to 73°; but the deed has been signed and sealed, and the parties are preparing for the payment of the money and the delivery of the land.

Most of us have already seen what was Russian America on the map, and need not be told that it begins at 54° 40' north latitude, and runs along the coast with a width of about thirty miles, till it reaches Mount St. Elias, in latitude about 60° north, that the line then runs northward to the Arctic Ocean, leaving on the west a large territory, which terminates on the south in the peninsula of Alaska, on the west in Cape Prince of Wales, which extends into Behring Strait, and on the north extends to the Arctic Ocean.

We know that there are numerous islands along the coast from 54° 40' to Mount St. Elias; that Kodiak is a large island south of Alaska; that at the end of Alaska the Aleutian Islands, some fifty in number, form an arc of a circle reaching nearly to Asia, and inclosing Behring Sea, otherwise named the Sea of Kamtchatka. These boundaries many can give now who a few weeks ago only knew that there was a part of the continent somewhere north that belonged to Russia. When the United States own it her citizens study again their Geographies, and with new zeal learn of a land which they can call their own.

Our Geographies and Encyclopædias help us little more than to bound this territory and to estimate the number of its inhabitants. It is only after a considerable search among books of all kinds and in various languages, and conversations with some of the few persons now in the States who have visited this territory, that we feel at all satisfied with the imperfect knowledge we can obtain of this country. It is our object in this paper to throw together such information as we have obtained from various sources in regard to this territory; to satisfy, as we can, the desire of those who wish to know more of what the United States has bought for seven millions of dollars in gold.

The extent of this territory, including the islands, is about 550,000 square miles. The general coast-line, as measured on a line without following the smaller indentations of the coast, is about 4000 miles, while the coast-line as it runs into the bays and around the islands is about 11,270 miles.

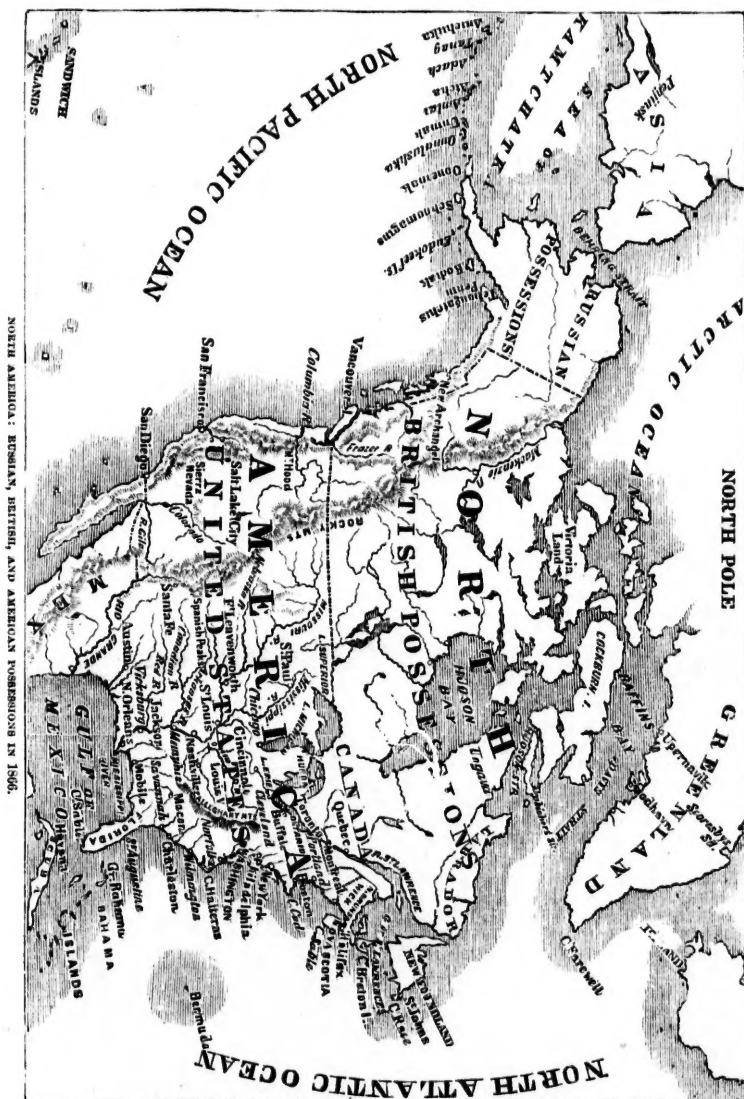
The title of Russia to her possessions in America was the title of the discoverer. Though it was known in the early part of the last cen-

tury that America and Asia were separated by a wide ocean at the south, it was not known that they were not united at the north, and the Czar Peter the Great, being curious to know whether his possessions were bounded on the east by water or land, sent Vitus Behring, then Captain, with his vessels to see if Asia and America were contiguous, or separated by a channel. When Behring found that they were separated by a strait, which now bears his name, he returned home with his report, and in 1741 was sent out on another expedition, with the rank of Commodore, to discover a passage to the frozen sea. Crossing in the latitude of the Aleutian Islands, the two ships of the expedition were separated, and Captain Tschirikow reached the coast on the 15th of July, at about 56° north latitude, while the Commodore, three days later, got sight of the continent in latitude 58° 28' north.

At this time Behring saw a high mountain, and it being St. Elias day he called it Mount St. Elias. Behring never lived to return to Russia, but died of scurvy in the next winter on the American coast, in what was afterward called Behring Bay, a bay just south of Mount St. Elias. The eastern coast of the continent had been discovered and occupied already by the English, who did not cling to the coast, but pushed inland. It was the policy of Great Britain to allow to her companies large tracts of land, which they occupied. The Russians, however, discovered and occupied the coast only, and that for the carrying out of the fur-trade alone. When, in 1825, Great Britain and Russia by treaty fixed a boundary line between their possessions in America, this boundary line did not run near the centre of the continent, but for nearly five degrees of latitude gave Russia only a width of thirty miles, and then ran north into territory which was an unknown land to each party. This same boundary line now separates the territory of the United States from that of Great Britain.

Not long after the return of the expedition of Behring the Russian American Fur Company was chartered, and established itself on the islands around the continent; but they did not settle on the main land, nor did they penetrate into the interior. Since Behring's voyages various nations have sent exploring expeditions to this coast, and in what we write hereafter we shall give information collected from the narrative of the Russian expeditions of Behring, Billings, Lisiansky and Golovin, and the English expeditions of Cook, Vancouver, Simpson, and Belcher.

Admiral Wilkes went no further north than Puget Sound, and no expedition has ever been made into this country by the United States, if we except the expeditions made by private individuals seeking to find the best route for the Russian American telegraph. With this



last expedition several assistants of the Smithsonian Institute were connected, and by their labors there is now at the Smithsonian Institute a great amount of interesting information in regard to this territory.

To the kindness of Professor Baird, of the Smithsonian, and Mr. Bannister, who was with

the expedition, and spent a winter at St. Michaels, on the coast north of the Kwickpak, we are indebted for several of our engravings, which are drawn from specimens in their collection, and for many facts in regard to the character of the country and its inhabitants.

From 54° 40' to Mount St. Elias there are a

succession of islands, and back of these islands the coast to the boundary line is but the slope of a mountain range. The islands have not been explored, and even the interior of Sitka is unknown to the inhabitants of New Archangel, which is at the head of a small sound on the island, and is the principal station of the Russian Governor. This coast, with the neighboring islands, is generally well wooded quite down to the water. The islands are mountainous, and the general character of the shore is steep and rocky. Very little is known of the country back from the shore, and, with the exception of those who have gone into British Columbia by the Sticlin, which flows into the Pacific in the latitude of Sitka, it is not probable that the Russians or any whites have crossed the narrow strip of thirty miles. What we have said of the exploration of the coast to Mount St. Elias will apply generally to the whole coast. The Russians have ascended the Copper River for some distance, and on the Kwickpak they have established a post at the distance of about four hundred miles from the mouth. But it was reserved for the citizens of the United States to navigate this river for one thousand miles, and to put—for what on a map before me dated 1865 appears as "unexplored"—a clear line, which on all future maps will show that the Youkon flows into the Kwickpak. Most that is known of the interior of this country has been obtained from the natives, who have come to the coast to trade their furs, or have gone to the Russian post on the Kwickpak for the same purpose. From them we learn: that south of the Kwickpak the country is generally wooded, and contains high mountains and large lakes. From Mount St. Elias to Alaska the shore is well wooded, but beyond that no forests are seen from the shore, though it is known that in the interior the forests extend for some distance north of the Kwickpak.

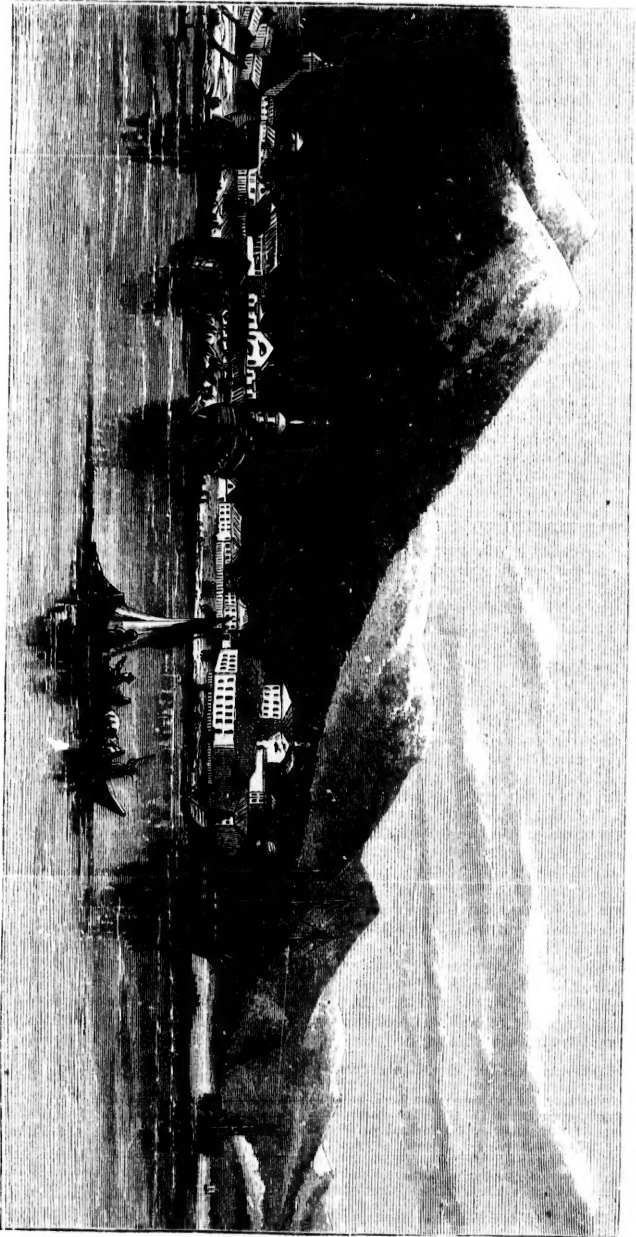
Of the Aleutian Islands we know more, for they are small and are quite destitute of trees, strangely contrasting with the woody mountains of the continent. The steep and rather high mountains of which the whole country consists appear like a genuine though rather irregular net-work of cones, the heights and slopings of which are of course very much diversified, and among which there are, in the interior, long but narrow valleys without plains. There are frequently real plains, as may be seen in an engraving of Unalaska, in a German work of F. H. von Kittlitz, who was with a Russian exploring expedition in the years 1827, '28, and '29. These plains have quite the character of alluvial soil, and are generally covered

with grass so luxuriant as quite to impede travel. Raspberry bushes and dwarf willows are also common. Up to a considerable height the mountains are covered with a rich turf, but their tops—some of which are 2000 feet high—exhibit nothing save the bare slate rocks, strips of perpetual snow, and here and there a few isolated plants. The snow line is by no means regular, owing to the broken surface of the country and the influence of the volcanic element in the temperature of the soil.

The climate of this country is not what might at first seem to belong to its high latitude. The eastern coast of North America is much colder than the western. A glance at a map showing the ocean currents of the Pacific will at once explain this difference. It will be seen that the heated water of the equator flows in a continual current toward the north, and that this northern current comes quite near to the coast from the parallels of 50° to 58° of north latitude, thus warming the whole coast to Mount St. Elias, and then curving along to the peninsula of Alaska and the Aleutian Islands. The temperature of the Aleutian Islands and of the coast to 54° 40' is very much the same in the winter, and for the month of January is about 32°, which is much higher than that of the same latitude in the interior. The January isothermal line of the Aleutian Islands runs through Sitka, Philadelphia, Amsterdam, and Peking. The climate there in winter is not too severe to support a large population. Above the Aleutian Islands, on the continent, the January isothermal runs nearly parallel with the parallel of latitude, as the coast there is not warmed by the ocean currents. In the summer we find quite a change in the climate of Sitka and of the Aleutian Islands. The Aleutian Islands are cooled by the cold winds that come from the north, and the masses of ice which float down through Behring Strait, while Sitka is protected from the northern winds, and is not reached by the masses of ice. The July isothermal of Sitka passes near Quebec. That of the Aleutian Islands runs north near the mouth of the Kwickpak, through North Labrador, Iceland, and Northern Norway. The warmth of the interior of Russian America, as compared with that of the Aleutian Islands, results from its protection from the winds of the north.

The average temperature of the Aleutian Islands is about 50° Fahr., nearly the same as that of Albany, Dublin, and Jeddo. From reports obtained from the Smithsonian Institute we extract the following, showing the range of the thermometer at various points:

	Spring.	Summer.	Autumn.	Winter.	Year.
St. Michaels, latitude 62° 28' N.....	28°75	52°25	27°00	7°	27°45
Fort Youkon, latitude 67° N.....	14°22	59°67	17°37	23°80	16°02
Ikomut, latitude 61° 47' N.....	16°02	49°32	36°05	6°05	24°57
Sitka, latitude 57° 3' N.....	59°05	53°37	43°50	32°30	42°12
San Francisco.....					55°73
Nain, Labrador, latitude of Sitka.....	22°67	48°67	33°05	0°4	26°40
Portland, Maine, latitude 43° 39' N.....	40°12	63°75	45°75	21°52	42°78
Fort Hamilton, New York, latitude 40° 37' N.....	47°84	71°35	55°79	32°32	51°52



NEW ARCHANGEL.

From this table we see that the summer in the interior, at Fort Youkon, though several degrees farther north, is much warmer than at St. Michaels, which is on the coast, while the winter at Fort Youkon, is much colder. By comparing Nain and Sitka we see the different temperature at the various seasons on the opposite sides of the continent, but in the same latitude. The average temperature at Sitka does not differ much from that of Portland; but its summers are cooler and its winters are as warm as those of Washington. It must not be thought from the picture we give of New Archangel, taken from a recent Russian work, that the mountain tops there are continually covered with snow; for the sketch was taken as early as May, and after that time no snow is seen on the mountains.

At the Kwickpak and on Norton Sound the winter begins about the last of September, and snow generally falls about the first of October, though it does not always remain on the ground. The small rivers and ponds freeze before the middle of October, while the large rivers and the harbors about Alaska close about the 1st of November. The temperature of the winter at St. Michaels is quite uniform, though occasionally the snow melts, and it even rains, and again come days when the temperature can only be measured by the spirit thermometer, which descends sometimes to sixty degrees below zero. In February the snow begins to disappear, and by the end of the month there is considerable bare ground. March and April are comparatively mild, and in early May the ice is pouring out of the Kwickpak;* after which vegetation soon appears, and the birds return. The sea-ice does not disappear till two or three weeks later. The winter at St. Michaels permits men to be out of doors, unless the weather is stormy. Some of Major Kinnicut's party were engaged in sledging supplies into the interior, some two hundred miles from St. Michaels, and slept in open camp with no great inconvenience. The sun during the winter is above the horizon only a few hours each day, and only a short distance, so that its influence is very little. Behring found the winter severe at Behring Bay. At the Aleutians the winters are not very cold, but they are long, as also at the Sitka.

Lisiansky spent the winter of 1804 at St. Paul, one of the Russian American posts on the island Kodiak, south of Alaska. He went into port November 16, and was ready for sea by the middle of April. He says:

"During the month of December, though the winds blew from the north, the weather was tolerably mild. The thermometer was not lower than 38° Fahrenheit till the 24th, when it sunk to 26°. The ground was then covered with snow, and remained so several months. The winter was not, however, supposed to set in till the beginning of January. During its continuance, a few days excepted in February, the air was dry and clear, and the winds blew from points between

the west and southwest. The severest frost was on the 22d of January, when the thermometer fell to zero. The last days of February and the beginning of March were also so cold that the mercury often stood between 13° and 14°. During this period I purposely measured the thickness of the ice in the ponds near the settlement, and found it to be eighteen inches. In the month of March commenced the return of spring.*"

This winter on the coast, as he elsewhere states, seems to have been an exceptional one in the number of clear days, and was warmer than the average winters of Sitka; but generally the winters of Sitka and Kodiak are very much alike. At each of these places the deposit of moisture during the year is very large, and larger probably at Sitka than at Kodiak. The subjoined table will show the annual deposit at various places in inches:

Places.	Spring.	Summer.	Autumn.	Winter.	Year.
Sitka	18.32	15.75	32.10	23.77	89.94
Astoria	16.43	4.85	21.77	44.16	87.20
San Francisco,....	6.65	0.00	2.69	13.49	22.93
Washington, D.C.	10.48	10.53	10.11	10.06	41.24

At Sitka during last year there were only about sixty clear days. The great amount of rain there is caused by the evaporation from the warm current of the ocean being suddenly condensed when coming in contact with the cold mountains of the coast. At Astoria, near the mouth of the Columbia, it will be seen that there is also a very large deposit. All the navigators on this coast speak of the great number of rainy and foggy days. About the Aleutian Islands there is also during the spring months a great amount of fog, which extends up into Behring Sea.

In regard to the agricultural products of this territory, we know that at St. Michaels lettuce, parsnips, turnips, and a few vegetables of this description are raised by sowing them in beds; though the ground only thaws to a depth of about two feet. At Fort Youkon, some degrees further north, they raise even potatoes, and the ground thaws much deeper, as is shown from the large trees which grow there, some of them being a hundred feet in height. We even hear that a party coming down the river in the summer of 1866 suffered from the heat. All the reports of exploration speak of the great quantities of currants, blackberries, raspberries, strawberries, and mulberries which are to be found in the Aleutian Islands, and on the coast, and on various islands from Alaska down to 54° 40'. The want of sunlight prevents the successful raising of such vegetables as we should expect from the average temperature. On the Aleutian Islands they raise very little; though most navigators think they might raise more, and the luxuriant grass shows it. On Kodiak barley and potatoes are raised. On Sitka, though warmer, they can raise no more, and the potatoes are small; though on some of the islands

* The ice in the Penobscot, Maine, broke up this year April 19.

* It is from the Island of Kodiak and the coast opposite that the supply of ice for San Francisco is obtained.

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MOUNT ST. ELLIAS.



near Sitka they raise very large potatoes, and the Indians on Queen Charlotte's Island were accustomed, after the supply of furs had been exhausted there, to raise potatoes, which they could trade for furs to the Indians on the main land. The natives have very little desire for the fruits of the earth, and so generally pay little attention to the cultivation of the ground. Around the posts of the Russian American Company there are gardens, but they do not pretend to raise their own supplies. Lisiansky, who spent part of the summer there, says:

"The climate of these islands (Sitka and Kodiak) is such as in my opinion would favor the cultivation of barley, oats, and all sorts of European fruits and vegetables. The summer is warm, and extends to the end of August. The winter differs from our autumn in this only that there are frequent falls of snow."

In the early days of the Company they had a station at Ross, on the then Mexican coast, at which they raised wheat, etc., for their posts in the north. For a period of some ten years till 1846 they received their supplies from the Hudson Bay Company at Vancouver, who raised them on their own lands or bought them of the settlers in Oregon Territory. Now they procure them from San Francisco.

It is probable that much more could be got from the soil than has been. An engraving in the work of Kittletz gives some idea of the variety of the forests and undergrowth at Sitka, and shows that the soil is rich and able to support even luxuriant vegetation. The moisture of the atmosphere causes all varieties of trees and shrubs to grow luxuriantly, and naked rocks exhibiting no traces of vegetable mould are covered with woody vegetation. This engraving was made to show the variety of the forests; and so well has it been done that the varieties can be distinguished. The principal forest trees are pine, larch, and cedar. There are also fir and alder. The timber grows to the water, as will be seen in the engraving of New Archangel, where the forest still runs down to the settlement, and the woods have never felt the stroke of the axe. Speaking of this settlement Lisiansky says: "The woods will yield a handsome revenue when the Russian commerce with China shall be established." Near Copper River the forests are the same. Billings got a number of fine spars there. Poplar, cedar, and birch abound at Kodiak, but pine is found there only in a few places.

These forests will soon, if not at once, be very valuable; for before the acquisition of this territory there was no supply of pine timber within the possession of the United States on the Pacific coast. There is very little timber in California; and though there is considerable timber land in Oregon and Washington Territories, yet it is not generally convenient for shipping, as there are only two or three harbors from San Francisco to Puget Sound. The timber of this new territory is better and more accessible than at any other point on our Pacific coast.

The population of "Russian America" has been variously estimated. According to Lipin, it was 61,000. Keith Johnson makes it 66,000. McCulloch states it in 1846 at 61,000, and in 1858 at 72,375. These estimates are made from no very satisfactory data. Nearly all of the reports of the exploring expeditions speak of the native population as diminishing. Mr. Bannister thinks all their estimates are too large, since the tribes in the interior are nomadic, and may have been counted several times. Some of the early voyagers arrived at figures very similar to those given above by counting the number of *baidars* or boats belonging to the natives, and from that they estimate the number of the inhabitants.

From 54° 40' to Mount St. Elias and on the neighboring islands live the Koloschians, who are Indians, and number some 20,000. They speak three or four different languages. From Mount St. Elias to the Bay of Kenai are other Indians—the Kenaians—speaking a dialect of the Athabaskan language, which is spoken by the tribes who live on the Yonkon, and who inhabit British America, thence eastward to Hudson Bay. Along the remaining part of the shore the Esquimaux live. They inhabit the shore from the mouth of the Copper River westwardly and northerly to the shores of Behring Strait, and then eastwardly along the Arctic Ocean till they unite with their congeners of British America, Labrador, and Greenland. These Esquimaux speak varieties of the same language. The Aleutians, who inhabit the Aleutian Islands and speak the language of Unalaska, are also Esquimaux, but yet altogether different from the Esquimaux of the coast.

The Koloschians are of a middling stature, and very active. Their hair is lank, strong, and of a jet-black color; the face round, the



KOLOSCHIAN LIP-ORNAMENTS.



GROTESQUE MASK.

lips thick, and the complexion copper color. They paint their faces with white and black paint, and at times wear grotesque masks made of wood. The men wear various ornaments in



DEATH-HEAD MASK.

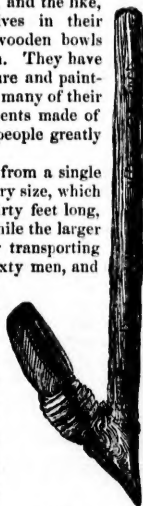
their ears and noses; the women, when about twelve years of age, insert a piece of ivory in a slit made in the under lip; a larger piece of ivory or wood is inserted from year to year,



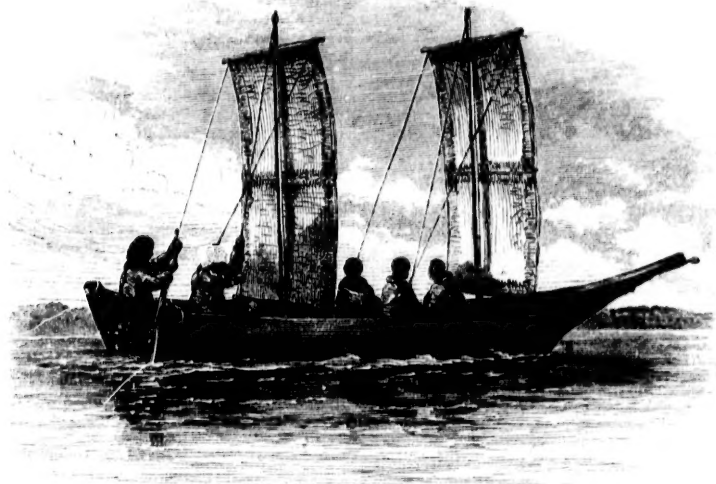
DANCING MASK.

and in some cases it is four inches wide, and projects from side to side six inches. The larger this ornament the more important the woman is considered. The flesh grows out with the wood, and the appearance of these women is very disgusting. They formerly dressed altogether in skins, but now wear blankets or else a sort of skirt made of coarse cloth or skins. The rich wear fine blankets made by their own women; but most of the cloth worn is produced from traders in exchange for furs. Their weapons were formerly spears and arrows, which appear to have been tipped with iron and copper. Even when they were first visited by Europeans as early as 1805 they were generally armed with muskets. They cut off the heads of those they kill, and make slaves of the prisoners. They live in villages near the shore in houses made of plank, with no window and only a low door; in the middle is a hole for the fire, the smoke from which escapes through an opening in the roof. Sometimes their houses are partitioned off, but commonly they have only one room. In the summer they leave their houses and scatter along the coast in search of fish. They have a strong belief in, and a distinct idea of, the right to property, and the earliest visitors found that they were very anxious to trade, and that nothing could be obtained from them without giving them something in return. They are very fond of trading, and keen at a bargain, and frequently become enraged with those who will not trade with them. They procure furs from the Indians of the interior, and trade them with the Russian Company, in addition to the skins of the otter and other animals which they themselves kill on the coast. The rich have, at the present time, various dishes, plates, and the like, which they keep on shelves in their houses. The poor have wooden bowls and spoons of wood or horn. They have considerable skill in sculpture and painting, and one might suppose many of their masks, images, and implements made of wood, to be the work of a people greatly advanced in civilization.

Their boats are dug out from a single trunk. Those of the ordinary size, which they use for fishing, are thirty feet long, and carry a dozen men; while the larger ones, used for war, and for transporting whole families, will carry sixty men, and are nearly fifty feet long. Every one who has seen these boats describe them as very beautifully modeled. To move them they use the single paddle, though when making a long voyage they use a square sail sometimes, having four masts in one canoe. Formerly their sails were of a coarse matting made by themselves; but now they have cloth sails,



STONE ADZE.



CANOE USED BY KOLOSCHIAN INDIANS.

and with such sails they frequently visit Victoria at the lower end of Vancouver Island, which is some eight hundred miles from their home.

Their food during the summer consists of different kinds of berries, fresh fish, and the flesh of amphibious animals, and during the winter they live on dried salmon, train oil, and the spawn of fish, especially herrings. As yet they have not learned to cultivate the ground or acquired a taste for vegetable food; but they are so fond of trade that it is not improbable that when the supply of fur-bearing animals shall be diminished they may become farmers, as did the Indians of the same race on Queen Charlotte's Island under similar circumstances.

The women are cruelly treated, do most of the work, and are not so fine-looking as the men. Polygamy exists, and the marriage relation is not much regarded. As soon as the children can walk they are bathed every day in the sea whatever be the weather. In this way many infants perish, and the tribe do not increase rapidly; but those that survive make the strong, vigorous, and enduring men and women that we find them.

The Koloschians generally burn their dead, and deposit the ashes and unconsumed bones in wooden boxes raised on pillars. On some occasions slaves are burned with their masters. Fortunately for the Russians the Indians fight with each other, and have not combined against them. Their wars with each other prevent

them from increasing in numbers, and various diseases, particularly the small-pox, sweep away many of them.

The Russians established the post of Archangel, on the Island of Sitka, in the year 1800, which, in two years afterward, was attacked by a party of six hundred Koloschians armed with muskets, who destroyed the fort and butchered the garrison. When Captain Lisiansky visited the island in 1804 he, at the request of the Governor, assisted in making another settlement, the present New Archangel. The Indians had erected a fort, and were prepared to resist the Russians in their attempt to make a permanent settlement. The Russians had three or four vessels, from which they landed several cannon, and attempted to carry the fort by a land attack, but were repulsed, and would have been destroyed if they had not been protected by a heavy fire from the ships. On the next day the fort was commanded from the ships, and at night the Sitkans sued for peace, offering to give hostages.

For two or three days negotiations were carried on, when one morning it was found that the Indians had escaped, leaving only two old women and a little boy in the fort, which was found to be an irregular square with its longest side looking toward the sea. It was constructed of wood, and so thick and so strong that the shots from the ships did not penetrate it at the short distance of a cable's length. On the side toward the sea were holes for cannon, and in the rear were gates. Within were fourteen

houses, in which a large quantity of dried fish and other provisions had been collected, and, from appearances, the fort must have contained at least eight hundred male inhabitants, who had abandoned it because they were short of ammunition.

This incident shows the warlike nature of these Indians sixty years ago, and they have not changed since. They have several times attacked the fort established by Lisiausky, even as late as 1855.

The Hudson Bay Company had a lease from the Russian Company of the coast as far north as Mount St. Elias, and established two trading posts among the Koloschians; but they found them so troublesome that they were glad to withdraw, and afterward traded along the coast with a steamer, which was sent out at certain seasons, and whose trading was always protected with boarding netting. These Indians seldom visit Vancouver Island and Puget's Island without carrying back with them the head of a white man. On one occasion, some years ago, they cut off the head of Mr. Ebey, an ex-collector of Puget's Island. From what we have learned there can be no doubt but that these Koloschians are better able to resist the whites

than any Indians on the continent have ever been.

The Kinaians, who live beyond Mount St. Elias, on Cook's Inlet, have been to a considerable extent subjected to the Russians. On the day after discovering Mount St. Elias Behring sent a boat ashore to reconnoitre. They found at an island some empty huts which the inhabitants of the continent used for fishing. These huts were formed of smooth boards, some of which were curiously carved. In the huts he found a small box made of poplar; a hollow earthen ball, in which were a stone rattled like a toy for children, and a whetstone, on which it appeared that copper knives had been sharpened. He found a cellar, and in it a store of red salmon. There lay in it also ropes and all kinds of household furniture, including a wooden instrument for procuring fire, which is thus described: "A board with a hole in it and a stick, the one end of which is put into the holes and the other turned about swiftly between the hands till the wood within the holes begins to burn; then there is tinder ready, to which catches the fire and communicates it farther." These Indians are very peaceful, and are skillful fishers and hunters.



MALE COSTUME.



FEMALE COSTUME.

The Kodiaks are physically somewhat like the Koloschians. The engraving of the Kodiak man is from Captain Billings's report, and was taken in 1790. They dress in skin frocks fastened around the waist with a girdle. Their heads are covered with a cap made of the skin of sea-birds, or with a hat platted of the fine roots of trees. Both the women and the men have, to a great extent, given up the use of ornaments in the nose and lips. Their food in the summer consists of fish of various kinds; but they do not provide dried fish for the winter. On the arrival of the Russians they believed alike in good and bad spirits, but made their offerings to the last only, considering the first to be incapable of doing injury. Many of them in the year 1805, and more now, profess to be Christians of the Greek Church, but only from policy; and some of them, for the sake of getting a shirt or handkerchief, are baptized two or three times.

They dress the dead in their best apparel, and bury with the hunters their arrows and harpoons, and place the frame of their boat over them. Their boats (*baidarra*) are lightly constructed of wood fastened together with whale-bone, and covered over with seal-skins, the seams of which are so well sewed that not a drop of water can get through. They carry one, two, or three persons. The hatchway-cloths are fastened tightly under the arms of the rower, and no water gets into the boat. The large leathern boats which the Kodiaks formerly used, and which would carry seventy persons, were taken from them by the Russians. Their houses are very much like those of the Koloschians.

The engravings representing a man and a woman of Unalaska, as seen by Captain Billings, make it unnecessary to describe the Aleutians particularly. The dresses are of skins, and the man's helmet is of wood. Their instruments and utensils are all made with amazing beauty and the exactest symmetry.

They use needles made of the wing-bone of

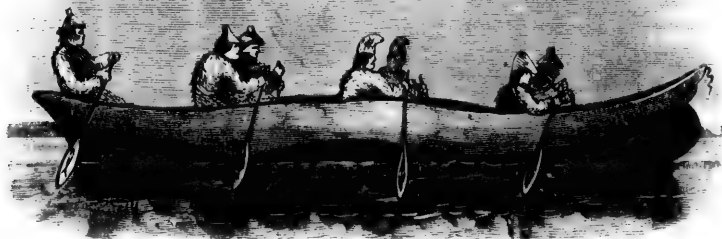
the gull, and thread made of the sinews of the seal, of all sizes, from the fineness of a hair to the strength of a moderate cord.

They have darts particularly adapted for killing animals, birds, and seals. Their boats are described as infinitely superior to those of any other Esquimaux. Captain Billings says: "If perfect symmetry, smoothness, and proportion constitute beauty, they are beautiful to me. They appear so beyond any thing that I ever beheld." They are transparent as oil-paper, about eighteen feet long, and can be carried with one hand even when sodden with water. They row them in smooth water about ten miles an hour, and keep the sea in a gale of wind, going into the breakers until the waters reach their breast. The paddles are double, and about seven or eight feet long.

The women are very skillful with the needle. In winter they warm their houses—which are very much like those of the Kodiaks—with hot stones. In summer they enjoy a hot bath, which they take by throwing water upon the heated stones. They obtain fire by striking a spark with a flint on native sulphur sprinkled on straw. Their dead they embalm and bury in boxes.

Of the Esquimaux who live along the coast little need be said, except that they are very much like the Aleutians. They are very fond of trade, and always have been traders. They trade with the Indians of the interior, with the Russian American Company, with the whalers who touch on the coast, and even cross Behring Strait in winter and summer, by way of Behring Island, and trade with the Esquimaux and Tchukchi on the other side, and have even penetrated for a considerable distance into the interior. Being so anxious for trade they are peaceful, and give no trouble to the Company. They use dogs to carry their furs on the ice and snow instead of reindeer.

The character of the inhabitants of the Aleutian Islands and of Kodiak have changed somewhat, partly owing to the influence of the Rus-



KODIAK BAIDARRA.



ESKIMAUZ DOLL.

sians upon them directly, and partly owing to the number of mixed breeds, or "Creoles," among them at the present time. In regard to the present state of their islands, perhaps we can not do better than to translate from the German review of Captain Golovin's account of his visit to the Russian colonies on the Northwest coast of North America in 1860. The expedition was sent out by the Russian Government to ascertain the condition of the colonies, which were thought to be injured by the influence of the Russian American Company:

"The 'Creoles' are generally the children of Russian men and Aleutian women, sometimes of Russians and Koloschian women, and less often of native men and Russian women. The children of Creoles remain Creoles. They form a peculiar caste, which enjoys a complete independence, and knows no duty or tax. The allowing them these privileges was designed to increase the colonization of the land, which it has already done, and the number of the Creoles increases every year, and already forms a sixth part of the population. It can be safely asserted that in ten years the Creoles will be the reigning race in the colonies, and the Aleutians, whose number is already diminished, will be altogether dispossessed. But it is not enough to populate the land; the population must also avail something for the development of industry—must contribute to the enriching of the country, which the Cre-

oles hitherto have not done, and, if they remain in their present state, will hardly do in the future.

"The blood of the mother appears in the children in a certain wildness, carelessness, and indolence. Likewise all the Creoles are exceedingly proud-spirited and sensitive. They have, besides, generally a good disposition and considerable talent for mechanical employments. They are for the most part well-built and good-looking, especially in the second and third generation. But the wild life which they begin to lead at a very early age has a destructive influence upon their constitution, and when about thirty or thirty-five years of age they nearly all suffer from consumption, which often carries them off, so that only a few Creoles reach old age. Intoxicating liquors are particularly destructive to them.

"The Russians who live in the colonies have not forgotten the illegitimate origin of the Creoles. They are proofs of the faithlessness of the Creole woman and of the indifference with which she is regarded by her husband, who for the most part is ready to sell her to the first man for a glass of rum. Therefore they look upon the Creoles with utter contempt, while they use the word 'Creole' as a term of reproach; even the Aleutians do not regard the Creoles, who, as they say, are no better than Aleutians—or rather, they are the very worst Aleutians, since they are the children of the worst of the women.

"The spirited nature of the Creoles is so affected by this feeling of contempt toward them, that they themselves are ashamed to be called Creoles; and although they do not love the Russians, they first approach them and feel their superiority. They consider themselves as the rightful possessors of the land, and would gladly play the first part, while they are looked down upon by the Russians and compelled to come under their influence. This is the natural result of their separation as a caste, and so long as that continues no law of the Company will change any thing.

"Sometimes among the Creoles quite respectable people are found, but they are the exceptions. Even education does not always work well upon their wild natures. Many Creoles have at the cost of the Company received a good education. Some have attained the rank of under-officers, others are captains of vessels, or clothed with various offices in the colony, but of only a few of these can favorable mention be made. Under a strong oversight they behave themselves very well, but left to themselves they give way to their native inclinations and become miserable drunkards.

"The Creoles on Atka, Unalaska, and Behring Island busy themselves with the hunting of the sea-otter, and there are among them very shrewd and active fur-traders. On the other hand those who live on Sitka and the islands of Kodiak consider it as beneath them to go with the Aleutians on the hunt. Some go whaling, others raise cattle and plant their gardens, or they build small boats, saw boards, and catch wild animals in traps.

"As far as raising cattle goes it is with many of them only a pretense for a speculation. They buy of the Company a cow of the nominal price of 40 rubles, sell her again for 60, 70, or 80 rubles, and return to the Company asking for another, because the first one has been devoured by bears, or has fallen from a cliff and has perished. The gardens are in any thing but a flourishing condition; of any thing more than gardens there is nothing.

"In short, the Creoles bring neither profit to the land nor to the Company, and even ruin themselves.

"To be sure, says Mr. Golovin, Aleutians have been brought to Christianity. They attend church very diligently, and carefully perform all religious ceremonies; but they hardly have a proper understanding of the excellency of the Christian religion; and persons who know them well, declare that to-morrow they would be just as zealous Mohammedans if their superiors ordered it."

Of the mineral wealth of this country it is not possible to write much, for the policy of the Russian Government has been such that they

have not only not penetrated into the interior, but have not made any satisfactory examination of the coast with a view of finding out whether it was rich in minerals. Mr. Golowin says:

"The mineral has its prizes scattered all about, which, unfortunately, are but little sought for, although of their existence there can be no doubt. Coal is every where at hand in greater or less quantities; particularly along the Kenai Bay do the coal veins appear for a considerable distance, and extend into the interior. Even with the superficial explorations that have been made at various points, granite, basalt, many kinds of clay, red chalk, ochre, various coloring stuffs, sulphur, etc., have been found. On the River Mjeduja (*i. e.*, Copper River) large pieces of native copper have been uncovered, and on the Kenai Bay there are undoubted traces of gold."

Speaking of an expedition made by the Russians in 1848, he says: "The result of this was the development of coal in the Kenai Bay which has since been developed by the Company, and not only is used in burning material in their steamers, but is also an article of commerce to California. Generally, however, the exploration was carried on without plan or system, and can only be regarded as very incomplete. Also on the peninsula of Alaska, on the islands of Unga, and on the islands of the Kosloschians' coast, traces of coal have been observed; but the explorations made on this region were too superficial, and the knowledge of those intrusted with the matter too slight, to allow us to speak positively in regard to any thing further."

The quality of all the coal that has been yet discovered on the Pacific side of North America is inferior to that of the Atlantic side—most of it is tertiary coal. There is some of this coal in California, but it is not mined to a very great extent, as labor is very high, and the coal is only fit for household purposes. At Vancouver Island the coal is better, and a considerable quantity is exported to San Francisco.

If, as appears from Mr. Golowin, coal has been exported from the Kenai Bay to San Francisco, it is probably a better coal than that from Vancouver Island. If it was profitable to transport this coal when the country belonged to Russia, certainly it will be now when the duty of \$1 50 per ton is removed. Let our citizens see that we import no more coal from Vancouver Island while we have it within our territory at Kenai Bay. The Pacific Mail Steamship Company carry the coal which they use for their steamers from the Atlantic side round Cape Horn. Perhaps these new mines may give them what they want nearer home.

In regard to the existence of copper, there can be no doubt. The Indians possess various dishes, plates, etc., which have been made from the pure metal. When the early voyagers first saw them they found them eager to trade for iron, but they had no desire for copper, of which they had sufficient. Iron has also been found at Sitka, and a gentleman who has been there within a year says that he has seen a blacksmith repairing the machinery of a steamer with iron

which he had extracted from the ore of that island. Let some of our citizens, with their eyes for mineral wealth, visit this country, and it is not improbable that it will be found to supply to the Pacific coast what it needs—abundance of iron and coal; and will add those mines of gold and silver which are already the wonder of the world.

The fish of this country are most abundant. The natives live on them. Every voyager speaks of the halibut as large and abundant. The cod fishery along its coast is carried on by vessels from San Francisco. It was begun some six years ago by a native of Massachusetts, who had often fished on the banks of Newfoundland. His first voyage was with a single vessel, and now some dozen vessels sail each spring from San Francisco to fish for cod. The cod banks are said to extend along the shore south of Kodiak, and the fish are very large and abundant. There are also banks which have been fished over on the Asiatic coasts. At present the population of the Pacific coast do not consume a great quantity of salt fish, but if the supply is increased the demand will increase.

The whaling ground is mostly above Behring Strait in the Arctic Ocean, though whales abound above the Aleutian Islands. The whalers winter at the Sandwich Islands, and pass up through the Strait in the early spring, returning in the fall. By the treaty of 1825, between the United States and Russia, it was agreed

"That in any part of the great ocean, commonly called the Pacific Ocean, or South Sea, the respective citizens or subjects of the high contracting powers shall be neither disturbed nor restrained, either in navigation or in fishing, or in the power of resorting to the coasts upon points which may not already have been occupied for the purpose of trading with the natives, saving always the restrictions and conditions determined by the following articles."

One of which provided that the citizens of the United States should not resort to any point where there was a Russian establishment without the permission of the governor or commander.

It might seem as if this treaty gave to the citizens of the United States all the facilities for fishing on the Russian coast which they require; but it did not. The Russian Governor construed this treaty in such a way that our vessels were not allowed to fish either for whales or codfish in certain parts of the coast where these fish abound, and the negotiations which brought about the recent treaty originated in the desire of the Pacific coast to have additional privileges for fishing.

The use of the harbor on the coast will not be of much advantage to our fishermen; for whalers do not frequent harbors and carry their supplies with them, neither would it be well for them to winter in them, for after a summer's whaling they require to be refitted, and the damp atmosphere of this climate is very unsuitable for tightening rigging.

The cod fishery can never be carried on successfully from this coast, for the fish must be car-

ried down the coast to Puget Sound or San Francisco before they can be dried, as there is too much rain on the coast and islands south of Alaska to dry the fish properly. Such is the statement made by our citizens who have been there. But, on the other hand, we have the statement that the Indians of this coast live to a great extent in the winter upon *dried* fish.

In the early history of the New England fisheries it was thought very important that our citizens should have a right to dry their fish upon the coast of Nova Scotia and Newfoundland, but now they dry no fish there. And the cod fishermen of Marblehead, who fish on these banks, commonly make two voyages to the banks and bring their fish home to dry. As soon as the fish are caught they are split and salted in the hold of the vessel, and in this way brought home, where they are unloosed and dried while the vessel returns to the banks. In the same way the fishermen from San Francisco can make three trips each year.

Salmon are very abundant in all the rivers, and are more caught than the cod by the natives. There are also many salmon in the Sacramento and Columbia rivers, and probably the supply from these rivers is quite sufficient for the present population of the Pacific coast. The Hudson Bay Company formerly sent many salt salmon taken in the Columbia to the Sandwich Islands. But now that market has failed on account of the poverty of the natives, who were the chief consumers.

In regard to the herring of this coast it need only be said that the natives catch them by means of nails driven into a pole, and each nail brings out a herring. A friend who does not tell fish stories, says he has seen them in such schools that he could not row his boat through them. Lapepede regards the herring as "*une de ces productions dont l'emploi décide de la destinée des empires*;" and the great Cuvier has recorded that the government of all nations possessed of any sea-coast where that fish is known has given special attention and encouragement to its capture, regarding such occupation as the finest nursery for the formation of robust men, intrepid sailors, and skillful navigators, and so of the highest consequence toward the attainment of maritime greatness.

Up to the present time furs have been the chief product of this country, and all the occupation that has ever been made upon it has been made by the Russian American Company, which was vested with the exclusive right to trade with the natives for furs. This Company has some fifteen or twenty different trading-posts, of which New Archangel, Kodiak, St. Michaels, and Unalaska are the chief. At these posts they not only buy what furs are brought to them, but the natives, especially the Aleutians, are hired as servants, and employed as hunters under the direction of an officer of the Company.

In the early history of this Company furs were more easily obtained than now, but for the last twenty years the supply has been very

constant. * Sir George Simpson gives the following as the Company's receipts for 1841: 10,000 fur seals, 1000 sea-otters, 12,000 beavers, 2500 land-otters, 20,000 sea-horse teeth.

Since 1841 the Company have established posts in the interior and obtain a greater variety of skins. The following table shows the value of the various skins at New Archangel during the last year:

Sea-otter.....	\$5/ 00
Marten (American sable).....	4 00
Beaver.....	2 50
Bear.....	4 50
Black fox.....	50.00
Silver fox.....	40.00
Cross fox.....	25 00
Red fox.....	2 00

The Hudson Bay Company have a post in this territory, which is situated near where the Youkon flows into the Kwickpak, and is called Fort Youkon. The Company find this one of the most profitable of their posts, and have not had any difficulty with the Russian Company in regard to its occupation; for although it is beyond the boundary line, yet it is so far in the interior that it does not to any considerable extent interfere with the trade on the coast.

The chief market for the furs obtained by the Russian Company is China, where they exchange them for teas. The furs from Fort Youkon are packed across the continent to York Factory on Hudson Bay, and from there sent to London, where they are sold to be scattered over the world.

If these Companies can find it profitable to establish trading-posts whose supplies they must bring across continents, and whose products must return the same way, certainly we can carry on the same trade from San Francisco, which is within ten days' sail by steam of the mouth of the Kwickpak. The Government will not probably grant a monopoly of this trade, and it will be left free to all. The effect of this will be that, for a few years, the number of furs obtained will be largely increased; but that afterward the supply will be considerably diminished, on account of the indiscriminate killing of all fur-bearing animals—old and young, male and female. Chartered companies, where they have had the exclusive control, have in various ways prevented the killing of the female and young animals, and so the prices have not been brought down, nor has the number of fur-bearing animals diminished. But when the trade shall be open to all, the Indians will kill every thing which they can sell to traders, who will be anxious to buy whatever they can sell at a profit, without regard to the future supply.

It does not appear that the Russian Company have been so successful in the management of the fur-trade as the Hudson Bay Company have been, and considerable complaint has been made in Russia in regard to their management. But this complaint does not seem to be so much that the Company has not managed its own interests well, as that it has done little or nothing to improve the country, and to make

it valuable to Russia. The Russian Company has been under the protection of the Emperor, and some of its officers have been appointed from the army and navy, with the agreement that their years of service in the Company shall count as years of service in the army or navy. Many of its servants are also from the army; but while connected with the Company they wear no uniform, though from previous service they are ready to resist any attack from the natives.

We have now seen that our new territory is large; has a great extent of sea-coast; is not very cold in winter, nor very warm in summer; is populated by Indians who are fierce and war-like, and by Esquimaux who are peaceful and already subjected; is already known to be rich in certain minerals, and is probably rich in others; is capable of producing various grains in the south; and can at once be made of value by its coal, its ice, its fish, its timber, and its furs.

Two questions remain to be considered: "Has the United States acquired a territory free and unincumbered?" and, "What is the best way to govern their purchase?"

We have seen it intimated in some quarters that the United States has acquired this territory, subject to certain rights of Great Britain; but we think such is not the case. By the treaty of 1825 between Russia and Great Britain it was agreed that British vessels should forever enjoy the right of navigating freely, and without any hindrance whatever, all the rivers and streams which, in their course toward the Pacific Ocean, cross the line of demarkation between the two countries. The principal rivers which were included in this agreement are the Youkon or Kwickpak and the Stichen. The Youkon rises near the centre of British America, from which point it runs northerly till it joins the Kwickpak. The Stichen rises in British Columbia, and empties into the Pacific in about 55° 30' north latitude. The navigation of the Youkon has not yet become valuable to Great Britain; but she already uses the Stichen to a considerable extent to reach gold mines which have been discovered near its source.

There appeared in a newspaper, published at Victoria, Vancouver's Island, some few years ago, an article which declared that England must have the mouth of the Stichen for her own, and that the simple right to navigate this river was not enough; for she could not suffer a Russian town to grow up at its mouth, which town would owe all its importance to the trade of the interior. The article is a very violent one, and sets forth clearly the value of the mouth of this river, and even advocates the taking forcible possession of it. The mouth of this river now belongs to the United States, and Great Britain will hardly take it by force. But another question arises: Has England still the right to navigate it freely?

The treaty of 1825 was continued by the

treaty of 1843; and when, as that treaty had been abrogated by the war, it became necessary in 1859 to make a new treaty—the treaty of 1825 was again continued. The treaty of 1859 provided, in regard to its own continuance, that it should remain in force for ten years from the date of the exchange of ratification; and further, until the expiration of twelve months after either of the high contracting parties shall have given notice to the other of its intention to terminate the same, each of the high contracting parties reserving to itself the right of giving such notice to the other at the expiration of the first nine years, or at any time afterward.

Have we now become parties to the treaty of 1825? or, in other words, Does the right which Russia gave to England of navigating certain rivers run with the land?—The better opinion is that it does not.

It must be noticed that even the parties to the treaty of 1825 did not consider that it was to be perpetual; for by the treaty of 1843 they expressly continued it. That "forever" with them meant "until restricted" is also shown by the fact that this treaty was embodied in the treaty of 1859, which is terminable on notice. The right to navigate these rivers was then by the parties themselves considered to be only a personal right, and one which did not necessarily continue even if the ownership did not change. This right of free navigation was a mere license given for no consideration, which expired with the change of ownership. If it was given for consideration we are not bound to grant it, for we bought land which, in the treaty, is declared to be free and unincumbered, and Russia must see that it is so. But if it is considered that we are subrogated to the rights of Russia as existing under the treaty of 1825, it must be further held that we are subrogated to those rights as modified by the treaty of 1859, which would permit us to give notice to Great Britain in January next that, after a year from that date, English vessels can no longer enjoy the free navigation of the Youkon and Stichen.

Let it not be supposed that we are urging that the United States should not allow British vessels to navigate these rivers as they now do; we only mean to be understood as saying that, if we do allow this, we allow as a favor what we have a right to prevent; for we have acquired the possession of lands free and unincumbered.

The question of the best method of governing this colony is not an easy one. At the present time it has no population which can be made to feel and appreciate the peculiar advantages of our government. The laws which are to govern it must be made by Congress, or else the whole matter must be intrusted to a Governor, or to a Governor and Council, who must have regard not only to the present but to the future condition of the country.

When Mr. Golowin made his report he

thought that certain changes should be made by Russia in the government. He thought it best that the Governor should be appointed by the Crown from candidates offered by the Company, and that the Company should have the power of demanding his removal if they could show that his continuance in office would be injurious to the colony; that his powers should be limited by fixed laws, but he should be subject to the Crown alone, to whom he should make his report; that the officers appointed under him should report to him, and in no case should they use harsh measures against the natives or colonists; that the Governor should inspect the various posts each year, and should protect himself and the colonists from any attack, for which purpose he would need only the cruisers employed by the Company; that the colonists—in which number he includes the Creoles—should be governed by rulers of their own selection; that the natives who are subjected, as the Aleutians, should continue to be governed by their own officers, and enjoy the right of ownership in all lands occupied by them, and all disputes among them should, in the first instance, be settled by their own magistrates, and only referred to the Governor upon the request of the parties; that missions and schools should be encouraged, and more attention should be paid to the development of the mines and to agriculture.

Mr. Golovin desired that the people should govern themselves as much as possible; and he seems to think that they are able to do so with the supervision of a Governor. Let us act on his hints. At first we shall find more difficulty in governing them than the Russians have experienced; for neither Russian, Creoles, nor natives will be able to speak or understand our language. It seems best that they should have some part in the government; and no better mode seems to present itself than that some of them should be appointed by the Governor, who, with others—in all not more than ten—should constitute a Council to the Governor. Let the Governor and Secretary be appointed at Washington. Let them both be men who from their own experience are acquainted with the various methods of managing Indians.

It may be well at first to send one or two companies of infantry with them, which, if not actually needed, will serve to impress upon the natives the power of the United States. An armed vessel should also be ordered to cruise along the coast for the same purpose, which can be used in case of necessity to destroy the villages of the Koloschians who live along the shore, and who are the only Indians who will give trouble.

Many people think that the United States have bought what is of no value; and if we have in this sketch done any thing to show that this territory is a valuable acquisition we are satisfied. We have not spoken of the political advantages of this territory, for those are apparent.

Edward Winslow, in his narrative of the
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"True Grounds and Causes of the First Planting of New England," relates an interview between James I. and the agents of the Puritans who went over to England from Leyden in 1616 to solicit his consent to their going to America. The King asked them, "What profit might arise?" They answered, "Fishing." The Puritans came to this continent and landed when the season was more severe than the winter on a great part of the coast of Russian America, and where the mean temperature is nearly the same. They came for fishing; and what have not their descendants gained thereby? We have bought territory whose harbors and bays are new fishing grounds; and what may we not expect in two hundred years?